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Vol VII

THE ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY®

No 3



James Rigby's "Matchless Safe" Idea: When opened the first time, the matches are clearly visible. When closed and opened once more, the matches have disappeared and the advertising slogan has come true!

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THE ANTIQUE PHONOGRAPH MONTHLY® is published in ten issues per volume. It is mailed first-class to subscribers in the USA and Canada, and via surface or airmail to overseas. **APM** welcomes articles and news of interest to its readers, and offers its services to appropriate advertisers at reasonable rates. Please notify us promptly of any change in address to ensure receiving your copies on time.

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DEAR APM:

Question: Why is it that I always get static when I make home recordings on cylinders, no matter how carefully I arrange the recorder?
**D.Y.,
Duluth, MN**

Answer: I will assume you are using a clean brown wax cylinder or have cut below any existing mildew. The main reason why collectors still experience static is that the cylinders have not been shaved smooth enough. The Fall 1902 Edison Catalog clearly stated that "as delivered by the factory, Blanks do not have surfaces prepared for receiving a Record. It is necessary to shave off one or two turns to secure a perfectly true working surface." And the August, 1905 issue of *The New Phonogram* said that "if blanks are properly shaven, they will not scratch." I would guess that for some reason you are not getting a perfectly even working surface. It is possible that the blanks have dried out somewhat, but you can use an old trick of shining a light bulb at the surface prior to and during the shaving and recording operation. □

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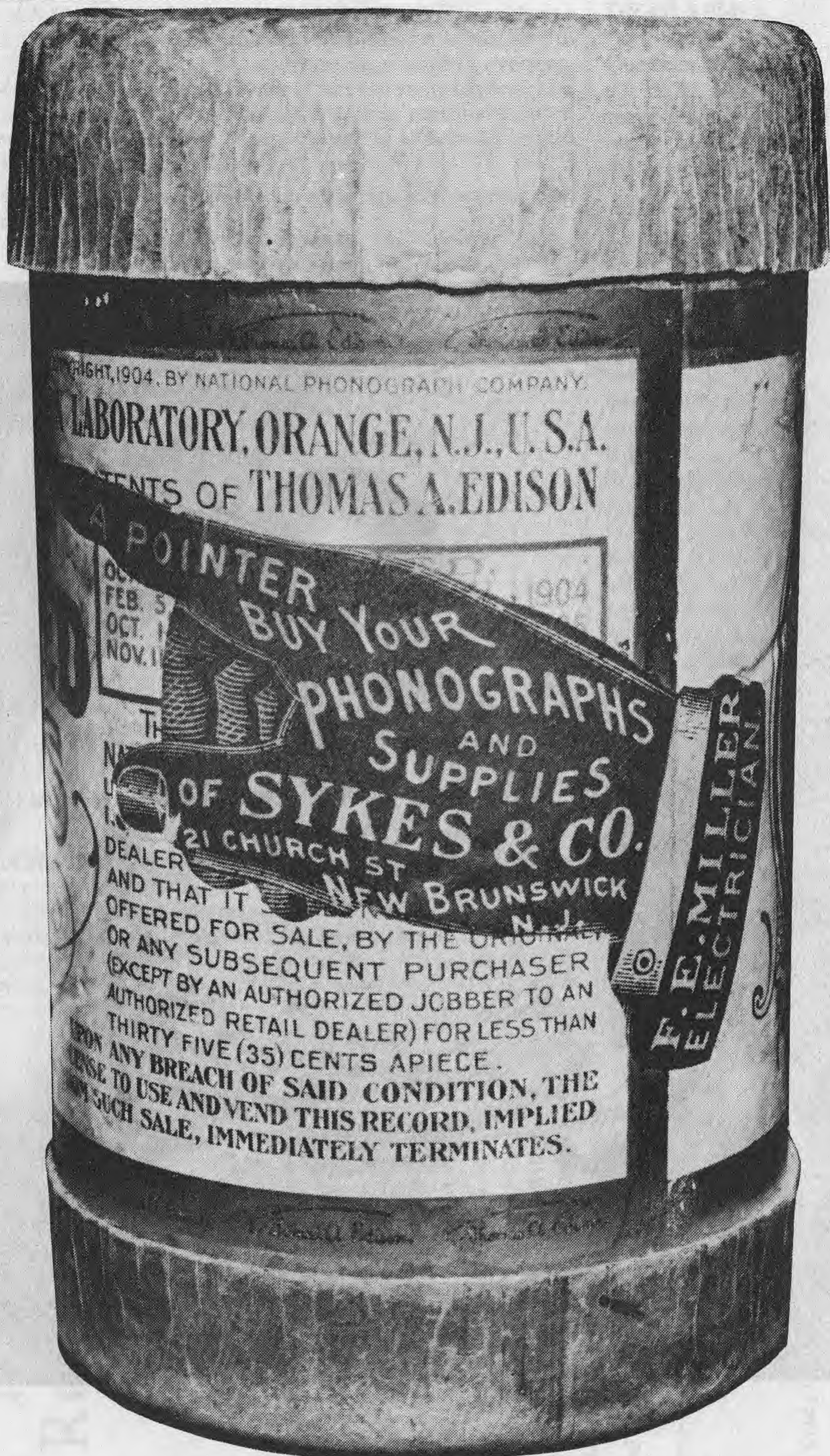
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James Rigby also had his shop name imprinted on the backs of Edison's New Phonogram.



Previous articles in APM have shown (see Geo. Paul's Index) a close connection between cigars and the phonograph. Here, Perry Levinsohn shows off his electric cigar lighter in the shape of the Master himself (ca. 1920's).



John Sykes pointed out the virtues of the Gold-Moulded cylinders in 1906, but some may have thought the idea a little "heavy handed"! Several years before, Edison used the design of a (smaller) red hand on a celluloid button.



The frequently changed steel needles, considered a liability by many, actually furnished an endless opportunity for phonographic advertising.

FROM THE GOLDEN AGE

Joe Klée

When I began writing this column, it was my decision to call it "From the Golden Age of Operatic Recording". I soon found that title a bit too constricting as it closes the door to the inclusion of lieder and operetta which certainly belong in any survey of golden age vocal recordings. That's why I've shortened the title to "From the Golden Age".

Now we get to the further consideration of *when* was the Golden Age. To most vocal collectors that I know "The Golden Age" (if you put it in quotes) lasts from the beginning of vocal recording up to the advent of electrical recording. It is certainly true that this represents *a* golden age. But other ages that followed were almost as golden. Maybe the 1930s lacked Caruso and Farrar but they had Flagstad and Melchior. The '40s had Bjoerling and Bidu Sayao. The '50s had Richard Tucker and Renata Tebaldi. The '60s had Leontyne Price and Carlo Bergonzi. The '70s had Pavarotti and Joan Sutherland. So every decade makes its proper claim for having its share of gold.

What's especially interesting to me are the singers who have taken enough care of their vocal resources and their health that they survive into later eras. One of these is Jan Peerce whose debut at the Metropolitan Opera in 1941 already found him 37 years old. Today he is pushing 80 and Vanguard Records has just released two LPs recorded when the tenor was 76 years old (in 1980). Peerce never did have the most accurate of voices, the most perfect of techniques, but he always had musicality and he always had passion. He still does. Sometimes his passion descended into schmaltz but here he seems well in control of his vocal equipment. Vanguard VSD 71276 shows the tenor in nine operatic arias. Vanguard VSD 71277 features an equal number of cantorial masterpieces. There are hits from his Met career such as "Dei miei bollenti spiriti" from *La Traviata*, "Questa o quella" and "Parmi veder le lagrime" from *Rigoletto* and "E lucevan le stelle" from *Tosca*, in addition to things he never sang at the Met like Lenski's aria from Tchaikovsky's *Eugene Onegin*. As far as the Cantorial music is concerned, there's no question but what Peerce and his brother-in-law Richard Tucker were the masters

of that genre. Suffice to say that Peerce does not disappoint his fans on either of these LPs.

Several issues ago I dropped the name of baritone Gerhard Husch along with the usual line about "what ever became of". I also mentioned that Arabesque Recordings was hoping to reissue Husch's famed recordings of Schubert's "Die Schone Mullerin" and "Winterreise". These recordings are now available as a three-record set, Arabesque 8107-3L. The third record is finished out with 16 additional Schubert lieder including six selections from "Schwanengesang" indicating that a complete recording of that cycle was at one point contemplated. The notes on the back cover of the boxed set shows that, at least as of 1981, Gerhard Husch still lives. He apparently still teaches and according to the liner notes has appeared since the War at Indiana University. The magnificence of Husch's voice needs no comment from me. Suffice to say that I date my active interest in German lieder from my first hearing of these recordings which were lent in their 78 form to a Chicago FM radio station sometime in the 50s. What is a bit surprising is the presence of Gerald Moore as accompanist on five of the miscellaneous Schubert recordings. Was Hans Udo Muller, Husch's usual accompanist, indisposed for one session? Also of interest is that four of these selections were never released previously (either as 78s or on LP). Outside of the complete cycles I'd point to Husch's recording of *Erlkonig* as a sample of the magnificence of both vocal and dramatic art as exemplified by Husch.

I would also like to comment concerning the series that the Metropolitan Opera Guild has put out under the title "Great Artists at the Met". One of their recent additions is *Met 110*, devoted to the career of Swedish tenor Jussi Bjoerling. From the obvious beginning of "Che gelida manima" from Puccini's *La Boheme*, his debut vehicle at the Met ... to the final selection on the disk, "Io l'ho perduta" from *Don Carlo*, an opera in which Bjoerling appeared on a historic live telecast from the old Met, it is pure delight. A projected complete recording of Verdi's *Un Ballo In Maschera* under the

direction of Toscanini had to be cancelled due to Bjoerling's ill health. His replacement was Jan Peerce but here we have Bjoerling's 1944 recording of "Di' tu se fedele". Yet if there is a recorded tribute to Jussi Bjoerling it is to be found in the complete recording of Puccini's ultimate masterpiece, "Turandot". Here the magnificent Swedish tenor, Jussi Bjoerling, meets the magnificent Swedish soprano, Birgit Nilsson, along with other stars who no longer grace the stage of the Metropolitan such as Giorgio Tozzi and Renata Tebaldi ... and those who still remain at the house such as Mario Sereni and Erich Leinsdorf. It has to be admitted, at some point, that Bjoerling's voice was not the tenore robusto that Caruso's was, or Martinnelli's, or Mario Del Monaco's for that fact. What Bjoerling had was an uncommonly beautiful vocal instrument and the good taste and musicality to use it to the best advantage. I do not agree with those who say he could be heard in the furthest corners of the opera house. I had my difficulties in live performance in Chicago balancing the sound of his romantic tenor voice with the overpoweringly dramatic heldensoprano fierceness of Nilsson's *Turandot*. But on recordings where the microphone was his ally, Bjoerling could sing "Nessun dorma" with all his characteristic sensitivity and not suffer from the fact that the sound was not dramatically huge. The recording of "Turandot" with Nilsson, Bjoerling, Tebaldi and Tozzi ... conducted by Leinsdorf has been reissued by RCA on their Gold Seal label, AGL 3-3970. I will admit my lack of familiarity with the later recordings of this work. If I have not paid them sufficient attention perhaps it is because I find this 1960 recording so satisfying that I do not need any improvements. There is also a superb recording of *Cavalleria Rusticana* with Renata Tebaldi and Jussi Bjoerling, conducted by Erede. Although it was originally on RCA this recording is now available as London 12101. The recording of *La Boheme* with Victoria De Los Angeles and Sir Thomas Beecham, Seraphin S 6099, has its adherents; however, in my opinion, it has been surpassed by the later recording on London with Luciano Pavarotti, Mirella Freni and Herbert Von Karajan as well as the recent televised production from the Metropolitan with Jose Carreras and Teresa Stratas (a marvelous performance despite the crassness of Renata Scotto's Musetta). Yet the fact remains that Jussi Bjoerling was a tenor well

worthy of being called a tenor of the golden age even if he didn't make his Met debut until 1938.

Now in case somebody out there wants to quibble about the spelling of the name Bjoerling, I have two sources that spell it with the "e" and one that spells it Bjorling so those who want to write telling me there shouldn't be an "e" in the last name ... know that you're outnumbered and that both RCA and the Metropolitan Opera Guild are on MY side. THANKS, GUYS. □

APM ARCHIVES ESTABLISHED

With the recent move of APM to larger quarters in the Ditmas Park Historic District, we have been able to establish the *APM Archives of Recorded Sound*. The main function of the *Archives* will be to preserve all kinds of data, printed and "archaeological", pertaining to the long history of recorded sound. For now, the *Archives* is available to APM subscribers only, but it may be opened to the general public too some day.

The format of the premises is that of a turn-of-the-century music shop, including an original National cash register which has keys for Edison, Columbia, and Victor. Here on permanent display are many of the legendary machines that have played a pivotal role in the history of the phonograph. For example, there is the Scott Phonautograph, and several tinfoil phonographs, including the one on page 21 of *From Tin Foil to Stereo*. Also on display is a Tainter Treadle-operated Graphophone, the Edison Class M Polyphone, the Higham-o-phone (the prototype of the Columbia BC), the Edison Talking Doll, a Lioret Talking Clock, the Amet phonograph, a Type G Graphophone, a Victor Type D, Edison Opera No. 10, the development of the Berliner Gramophone from handwind to lever-wind to Trademark, a Miraphone, as well as a variety of Zonophones, and other lesser known brands like Echophone, Paillard, Pathe, Thorens, Phenix, Lambert, Aretino, Vitaphone, Tempophone, Gabel's, US Everlasting, etc.

In addition, there are many cabinets, store signs, books, patents, advertising materials, posters, documents, etc., all from the golden age of recorded sound, 1877 to 1913. Cylinder records are well represented by 5000 different titles of all types and brands, including Tainters and a Pathe Master Cylinder.

Appointments can be made by mail or phone.

BOOK REVIEW

George A. Blacker

Within recent years, two chaps named Ron, both of them hailing from California, have achieved a marked notoriety. Catch is, the degree of it isn't anywhere near equal. The fellow in the White House has been getting the lion's share. I don't know whether I can help in any small way to improve the balance, but I'll try.

Let's get the technical details out of the way first. The second Ron to whom I alluded is Ron Dethlefsen, whose compilation of *Edison Blue Amberol Recordings, 1912 - 1914* was published in 1980. It was the first new work in what I've chosen to call "cylindrography" in several years, and it made a big splash — justifiably. I'm not sure how many of the limited edition of 500 are still available, but if there are any copies still waiting for a home on someone's shelves, don't waste time — grab one of them. The same people who bought up most of the copies of the first volume are sure not to delay ordering the companion volume, now available through this journal. Price (for now) is \$47.50 postpaid. The volume is a hefty one, weighing in at about five pounds and 512 pages. High quality binding and paper assure the owner that his book will hold up well and last a long time. It would be impossible to read it adequately at one sitting, as I've found out already; frequent dips into it will surely prove rewarding and keep you interested. It has kept me going for some time, I assure you!

As with its predecessor book, much of *Edison Blue Amberol Recordings II* is occupied by reproductions of the monthly supplements in which Edison Blue Amberols were listed (title slips had been discontinued). Many of these are photo-reproduced from the originals (in at least one case, a supplement with corners torn from its pages was used), but in a few cases, the supplements have been re-set in new type to match the old; these were in too poor shape to reproduce well, though they could be read reasonably well. A few individual record slips which had come to light since the publication of *EBAR I* are reproduced toward the back of this volume, as are some of the sleeve notes from various Diamond Discs which were dubbed to Blue Amberols. A chapter by Jim Walsh recaps the biogra-

phies of several of the best remembered Edison Blue Amberol artists, such as Ada Jones, Billy Murray and Cal Stewart — artists to whom Jim has applied the term "Olympian". There are several beautiful color reproductions of catalog covers and supplements — I could extend this list almost indefinitely.

I'd like to recap briefly some of what I considered the highlights of information contained in this book:

On two occasions, direct recording was used to make Blue Amberol cylinders after 1915, when the practice of dubbing from discs was instituted. In 1916, one of Edison's technicians took a cylinder master recorder to Detroit to make a series of cylinders by the Ford Motor Co. Band. None of the cylinders produced at this series of sessions were issued for general sale, however; the records seem to have been intended exclusively for educational use. Inference: a few of them may still be floating around Detroit and its neighboring cities. On a second occasion, a cylinder recording outfit was taken to Detroit, again at Henry Ford's behest, to record a number of titles by Henry Ford's Old Time Dance Orchestra. Most of these were restricted-circulation items, but six of the records were eventually released for commercial sale. The second series of sessions took place, believe it or not, in late 1925! The reason for the use of cylinder recording equipment on these "field trips" was that Edison was unwilling to let one of his disc recorders out of the studio. Many of the things which contributed to the quality of Edison's recorded sound were unpatented trade secrets, and Edison insisted on keeping to a minimum the risk of their being revealed to outsiders.

A few experimental Amberols were made of shellac, apparently in an effort to determine whether they would be (a) more durable than and (b) as satisfactory in performance as the wax Amberols. Specimens of these survive at the Henry Ford Museum. The author reports that they offered adequate sound quality, even after having been subjected to "torture" testing years before, but the surface noise level was quite high. I would guess that Edison tried shellac cylinders as a possible alternative to celluloid,

because all the American patents to the production of celluloid cylinders were controlled by the Indestructible Phonographic Record Company of Albany, N.Y., which had bought up the original Thomas Lambert patents (and *may* also have acquired the Varian M. Harris patents controlled by U.S. Everlasting). In any event, when Edison did decide to use celluloid, he could only do so by acquiring the British Philpot patents. For myself, I can't help wondering whether the use of shellac couldn't have introduced problems of its own. I wonder whether a shellac cylinder shrank enough on cooling to be easily withdrawn from the mold.

The production of 150 line-per-inch cylinders meant to be played on Ediphone dictating machines at secretarial schools (which was continued into the 1960's) has already been treated in *EBAR I*. Recently, an Ediphone cylinder spoken by Calvin Coolidge has surfaced. One wonders whether other similar "celebrity" items may be found in this series. Despite Dethlefsen's guess that it's the earliest recording of Coolidge's voice, though, I can't help wondering whether it does indeed pre-date his "Nation's Forum" record. Some digging seems in order.

For those who are interested in composers' recordings, here's an addition to the roster: the Arthur Fields version of "Ragging the Chopsticks", issued on Edison disc no. 50584 or Blue Amberol 3836. According to the sleeve notes for the disc, Archie Gottler happened to visit the studio when Fields was recording the song, and "sat in" on piano. I have the disc, and he is quite prominently featured.

I may as well admit publicly that when I first heard of Ron's projected book on Blue Amberols, I wasn't sure I'd be interested in it, as I already had (and still have) all of Dr. Duane Deakins' listings. One look at Vol. I was enough to convince me that there was more than enough new information to warrant its acquisition. Vol. 2 continues the good work — in spades! Vol. 3, now in preparation, will contain the artists' and title indexes whose lack is the only weakness of the first two books, and I'm willing to bet that even more information which surfaced too late for Vol. 2 will be included in Vol. 3. Ron is learning how information seems to come in ever increasing amounts when a project is begun and its beginning announced (see *APM* Vol. VII, #2 of this journal). May it never stop coming; if it did, discographical and/or cylinderographical research would cease to be interesting.

My recommendation about this book — and its predecessor *and* its successor as well — can be summed up in two words: "get 'em!" □

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PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Edison, Columbia, Victor, etc. Phonos For Sale. Also parts Bought and Sold. Write for list. SASE. Ralph C. Woodside, 51 W. Main St., Georgetown, MA 01834. Or (617) 373-5947 eve's. Also need elbow for rear-mount Type K Canadian Berliner, narrow end 1-3/8". Thanks. (VII-10)

100 phonographs for sale, many difficult and rare machines. Including Edison Class M, Concert, Victor R, Victor 9-55, RCA D22, and many, many more. Freelist for SASE. Joe Weber, 604 Centre St., Ashland, PA 17921. (VII-3)

Wood Horns, oak or mahogany Opera and Music Master; round cylinder cabinets, complete cases and lids for Opera, Standard, Fireside, Home, Gem, Triumph, etc. Exact Reproductions. catalog #4, \$1.00. Bill Moore, 10820 6th Street, Gilroy, CA 95020. Phone (408) 847-2845, 5-8 pm PST. (VII-3)

Edison nickel-plated Home, beautiful factory job, long-bedplate type with large plated morning glory horn, mint cond. Edison 2- and 4-minute Triumph with large 11-panel cygnet horn, mint. Columbia coin-op phono, Model BS. All original, mint cond. Large wood horn, elbow for Victor Schoolhouse model. Several nice Edison Standard & Home phonos at \$400. ea. Write or call: 1-207-989-4441. Lloyd Whitlock, 114 State St., Brewer, ME 04412. (VII-3)

Amberola 75 - best offer. Nice. Cylinder list for SASE. R. P. Marzec, 92 Swimming River Rd., Lincroft, NJ 07738. Or 201-842-7349. (VII-4)

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PHONOGRAPHS FOR SALE

Edison Opera Phonograph, mint oak model, with L reproducer, original paint, etc. \$1. for color photo. Reasonably priced. APM Archives, 502 East 17th St., Brooklyn, NY 11226. Or (212) 941-6835.

Columbia BH, Victor II, III, Edison Spring Motor, Hexaphone, Victor School oak horn, 2 #10 cygnets, extra straight horn. Orthophonic Credenza, 8-12, 10-50 coin-op., Borgia, Brunswick Radio/phono, Crystola, Gilbert, etc. Bowen Broock, 4858 Willow Lane, Orchard Lake, MI 48033.

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Thomas A. Edison and other Phonos for sale, SASE. Parts wanted for any phono. Write for list. *Sedler's Antique Village*, Ralph C. Woodside, 51 W. Main St., Georgetown, MA 01834. Or call (617) 373-5947 eves. (VII-10)

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Edison phonographs, cylinders, old 78's, player piano rolls for sale. Joseph McCullough, RD 1, Box 94, Mechanicville, NY 12118. (VII-3)

PHONOGRAPHS WANTED

Outside horn phonographs, any make or model. Toy phonos, needle tins and related paraphernalia. Also Vogue Picture Records wanted. Tibor Bertalan, 4309 Notre Dame Blvd., Laval, Quebec, Canada H7W 1T3. (VII-5)

Talk-o-phone phonos wanted. Also need 7" turntable and 3-spring motor. Will buy or will trade Talkophone horn. Steve Hobbs, 1116 W. Morgan, Kokomo, IN 46901. (VII-8)

APM has several readers who are looking for parts for a Type H Edison (coin-op Home), mainly the trip mechanism and chute. If anyone has these parts or is making perfect reproductions, let us know. **APM**

Edison Electric Class M, or parts thereof. Upper works for Bell-Tainter machine. Ray Phillips, 10107 Camarillo, No. Hollywood, CA 91602. Or (213) 877-0275 (office), (213) 877-8941 (home). (VII-3)

Capehart, Victor, RCA and Scott radio-phonograph combinations wanted. Also Wurlitzer jukeboxes 780, 950 and early wooden models. Call 717-875-4787 after 11 pm. Joe Weber, 604 Centre St., Ashland, PA 17921. (VII-9)

Need Victrola, ca. 1906. Dome top with long upper doors, for restored Adlai Stevenson boyhood home. Please quote price, condition. Martin A. Wyckoff, c/o McLean County Historical Society, 201 E. Grove St., Bloomington, IL 61701.

HELP: I NEED PARTS!

Need motor parts or complete motor for small Columbia front-mount. Dan E. Roberts, 1209 27th St., Vienna, WV 26105. Or 304-295-9563.

Governor weight and spring for Edison electric cylinder phono (vertical type, weight shaped like ball). Also stylus bar for Edison Standard Speaker. Buy or trade. Allen Koenigsberg, 502 E. 17th St., Brooklyn, NY 11226.

Lid for Edison Standard. Crane for 32" horn (Standard). Parts for Edison Ediphone. Want cylinder machines. Paul Goldberg, 657 Sneed Rd., Franklin, TN 37064.

Want Columbia reproducer measuring just under 2" in diameter. Ralph Schack, 30205 Avd de Calma, Rancho P.V., CA 90274 or (213) 377-7739 eve's. (VII-5)

Want horn for 1898 patent Edison Standard Phono. Also interested in Edison cylinders and other Edison artifacts. Eric A. Ghost, 319 Durant Way, Mill Valley, CA 94941.

Need handle for Brunswick 200 or Bohons Perfector will fit. Fred D. Krauss, 400 E. 8th, The Dalles, OR 97058.

Need bullet brake mechanism, speed regulator, knob and hand for Victor IV and V; also original black Gem conical horn. G. Birringer, 650 Glowood Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15227.

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HELP: I NEED PARTS!

Reginaphone 126 parts: tone arm/reproducer, horn, turntable. Also, original oak handle and gear covers for Edison Opera. Timothy Goon, 15660 Cumberland, Riverview, MI 48192. Or (313) 282-8768 or 237-7115.

RECORDS FOR SALE

Vast stock of 78's, Edisons, LP's. Make specific requests. SASE. Ralph W. Sim, 64 Riverview Rd., Clifton Park, NY 12065. (VII-8)

Collectors' Items of 44 records, mostly from 1901-1903. Some original Caruso. Make offer. Jim Shrum, 7611 Tattershall Way, Sacramento, CA 95823. (VII-4)

Original Sounds of the 1890's. New LP (reviewed in **APM**, VI-7, and *Stereo Review*, Nov. '80) features 22 Berliner discs, orig. recorded 1894-1899, including Sousa's Band, US Marine Band, Dan W. Quinn, Geo. J. Gaskin, Billy Golden, Arthur Pryor, many others. \$7.98 per copy ppd in US. **Westwood Records**, 2131 Greenfield Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025. (VII-3)

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Two and Four Minute cylinder records for sale. Send 50¢ for list. Robert F. Nowak, 3238 N. Central Park, Chicago, IL 60618. (VII-6)

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Wanted: Records, sheet music: "Whadda ya wanna make eyes for" from "Follow Me" (1916), Col 2205; "Oh by Jingo!" from "Linger Longer Letty" (1919), record label unknown. State condition, price. Ralph Reithner, 2952 Magliocco Dr., #14, San Jose, CA 95128. (VII-4)

Want cylinders, 78's or Edison DD's containing **Xylophone**, bells, or marimbabands, especially those by **George Hamilton Green**. David Harvey, 82 Gainsborough St., #1A, Boston, MA 02115 or (617) 262-9828, collect. (VIII-1)

Want 78 rpm recordings by Al Jolson, Victor, Columbia and Brunswick labels. State cond. and price. Roger Ledford, Rt. 9, Box 711, Hickory, NC 28601. (VII-5)

Want 78 rpm record of *And the Green Grass Grew All Around*, sung by Uncle Don. Write Michael Potash, c/o Amar, RD2, Otego, NY 13825.

Want Edison cylinder records *Henry's Made a Lady Out of Lizzie*, No. 5476 and *The Little Ford Rambled Right Along*, No. 2556. Fred Taranto, 160 Lowell St., Waltham MA 02154. Or (617) 894-2877.

Blank cylinders, cylinders with jazz, dance music, ragtime, cakewalk, any Swedish title is of great interest. Also want banjo, violin and accordion solos. Have many cylinders to trade. Also want pantographic copying machine. State condition and price. Anders Schilling, Bjornsonsgatan 95, 161 56 Bromma, Sweden. (VII-5)

W. J. Bryan cyl. records #9914 and 9923. I have 9917 and Ed. Grand Opera BL-4, BL-7, BL-8, B 162, and Columbia *Uncle Josh* #32729 and 14003 records to trade. Also want 78rpm records performed by Pauline Alpert. Tom Olds, 1327 Crystal Springs Rd., Grand Rapids, MN 55744. (VII-3)

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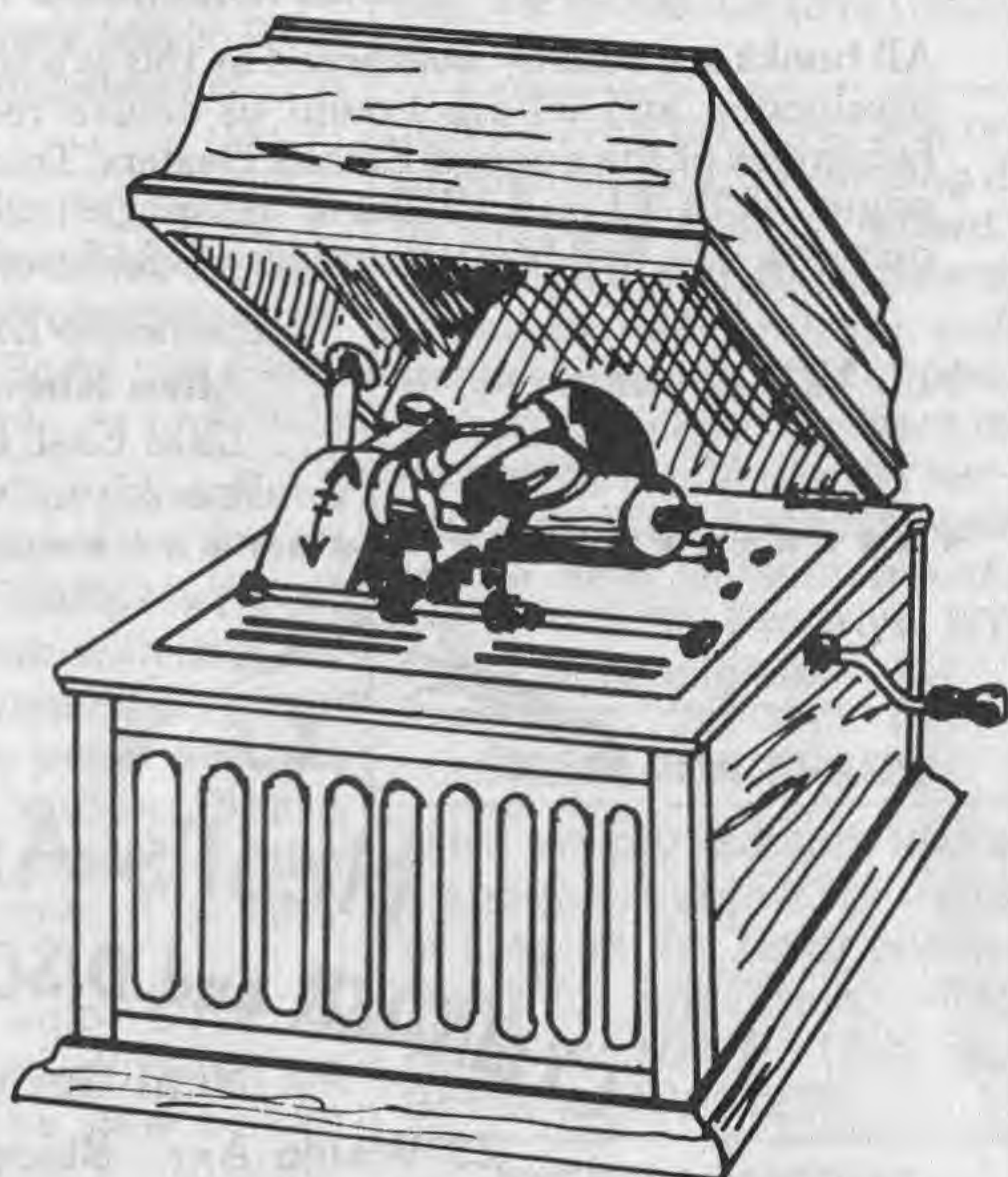


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Edison Phonograph Monthly

More Highlights of Volume VII, 1909 (312 pages)

Jan.	Good lessons for all Edison Dealers
Feb.	Cylinders will now have printed top labels
Mar.	Important improvement in governor collars
April	300 cylinder records to be withdrawn
May	Note Triumph Model A and B differences!
June	The new Fireside phonograph announced
July	J. P. Sousa signs Edison contract
Aug.	First cygnet horns announced
Sept.	2- and 4-minute Maroon Gem unveiled
Oct.	President Diaz of Mexico makes a record
Nov.	Amberola I (2-4) announced to the Trade
Dec.	Some notes on our Stella Mayhew

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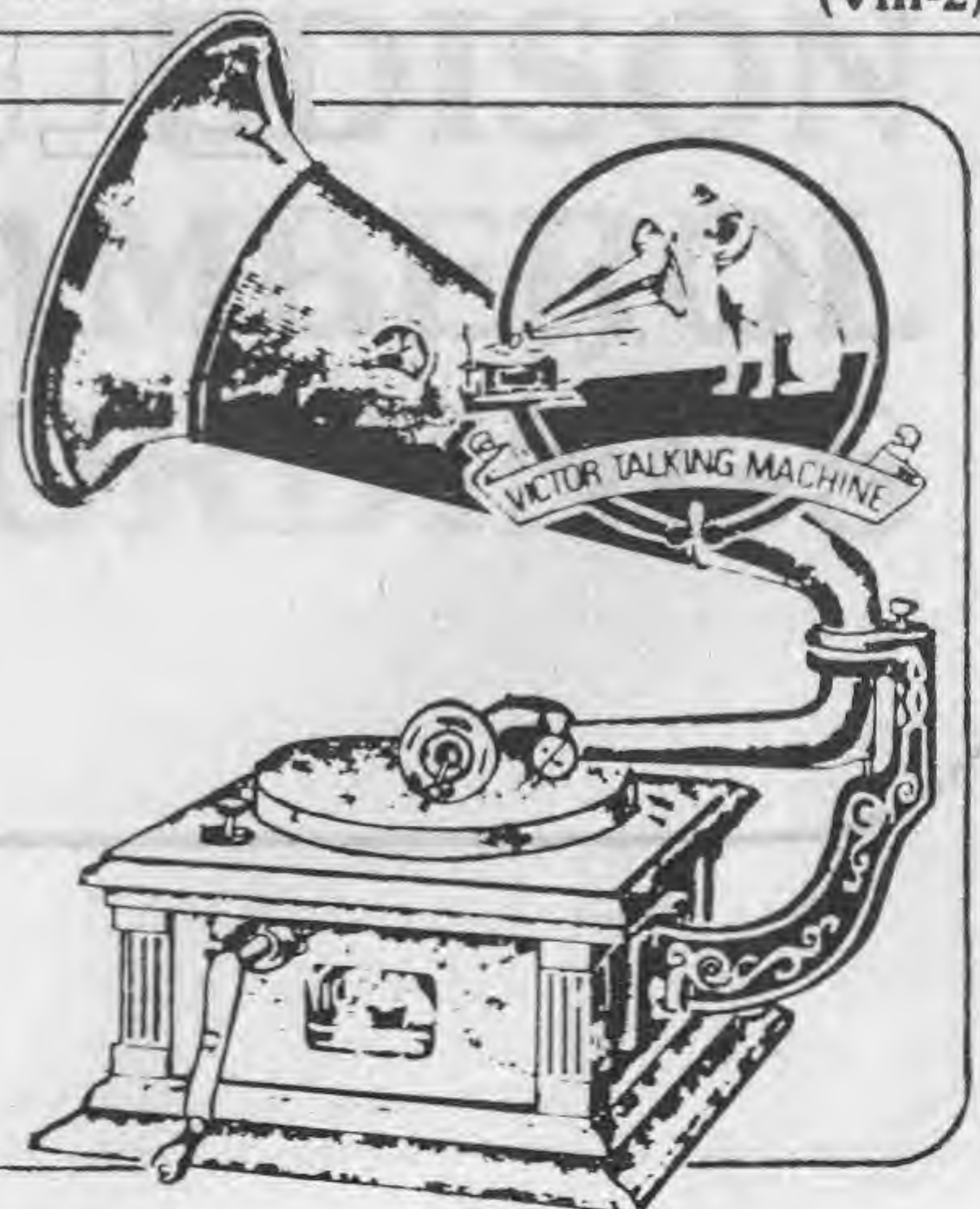
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